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## A CHINESE JOSS HOUSE.

The Beautiful Temple of the Gods  
in Los Angeles.

Kwan Kung, the God of War, and His  
Exalted Position Among the Celestial  
Deities—Interesting Features of the Worship.

One of the finest Chinese temples in America is found in the city of Los Angeles, the metropolis of southern California. It was erected three years ago and is the property of the Kung Chow company. The entrance of the building bears the Chinese inscription: "Purify thyself by fasting and self-denial."

On the first floor, says the New York Herald, is the assembly room, or guild hall of the company, over the door of which is a gilt inscription, reading: "Honesty is the bond of association." The proper place of worship is on the second floor, constantly guarded by an old gray-haired Tao priest. On the veranda, over the door, is a red tablet, bearing the inscription: "Let Shing Kung," or, "Pantheon of the Holy Gods." Worship offered at this temple is accepted by all the gods. On either side of the door, are three red tablets, with gilt inscriptions. One chandelier and two lanterns of enormous size hang from the ceiling. In a corner stands the furnace where paper money and other sacrifices are burned.

Entering the temple from the veranda we come to an isolated folded door, that is never opened except when the idol is carried forth in procession. Over the door hangs a magnificent monumental gateway piece of carved and gilded woodwork. It is a most artistic composition of miniature temples, festooned with flowers, amid which are throned the principal gods and goddesses of the Chinese Pantheon. Behind the folded doors are two altars, bearing the utensils of sacrifices, the joss sticks and the five sacred implements, consisting of an urn, two candlesticks and two vases. The fronts of the altars are set with elaborate carved work, representing scenes of feudal times, the pageantry of royal courts or figures of sages and kings, illustrious generals and statesmen, mingled with gorgeous peacocks and fabulous birds. The walls are adorned with bright-colored tablets bearing eulogistic inscriptions to the gods. One in crimson reads: "Thy grace abounds like ocean waves." A purple tablet says: "The breath of the gods fills Heaven and earth."

A Chinese temple has no fixed time for religious services. The worshiper comes when he has something to pray about. Family sickness, adverse fortune or some risky business undertaking drives him to the oracle. As he enters he lights his candles and incense, kneels upon a mat in front of the altar, and calls upon the god by name three times. The priest then takes up two semi-oval blocks of wood called Yum Yeung Puey, bows toward the idol, says his litany and tosses them up. The success of his supplications depends upon the position in which these blocks fall. If they both fall in the same position the god is not at home or is in a bad mood. If the blocks fall one with the flat side turned up and the other with the flat surface turned down, the god is supposed to be ready to listen. The worshiper now knocks his head three times three upon the floor and offers up his petitions. Thus done, the priest takes a cylindrical bamboo pot containing bamboo slips about fifteen inches in length, each marked with a number. These are called sticks of fate, and are shaken together with the ends turned to the idol, till one is jostled out. The priest or temple keeper looks at the number, consults his books, and hurls up the answer given to the man's prayer. The drum beats and the bell tolls.

Of all the gods worshiped by the Chinese in America Kwan Kung is the most popular. He is the hero of their ballads, novels and dramas, the embodiment of Chinese patriotism. In life he was a distinguished general, who, during

the reign of Emperor Lau Pey, conquered the various tribes then inhabiting the country, and welded them into one great Chinese empire, called the Middle Flowery Kingdom. It was not until eight hundred years after his death, however, that he became a god. The occasion of his canonization is said to have been the drying up of the salt wells in the province of Shan Si, a calamity that caused widespread misery. The emperor and his ministers are said to have prepared written prayers, which were burned and conveyed to Heaven in the smoke. An hour had scarcely elapsed when, as the legend says, Kwan Kung, riding his red charger, appeared in the mid heaven, and informed his majesty that his petitions could not be granted till a temple was erected to his honor. No time was lost; hundreds of masons were set to work, and when the top stone was set in its place the wells once more yielded their supplies.

It is said that during the rebellion of 1855 the hero appeared to the commander in chief of the imperial forces, directing the plan for the campaign and assisting in the battle that led to the overthrow of the rebels at Nanking. Grateful for this interposition, the emperor, Hien Tung, placed him on the same rank with Confucius in the national pantheon, and Kwan Kung was henceforth known as the god of war, whose full apotheosis title is the Faithful, Brave and All-Compassionate Prince Kwan Kung, the god of war.

## THE MIDDLE-AGED MAN.

He Buys Two Cents' Worth of Coconut Cakes and Renews His Youth.

"When I was a boy," said a middle-aged New Yorker the other day, according to the Sun, "I used to be very fond of coconut cakes, as they were called, small disks of candied coconut, which cost one cent each. They were colored white and red, and finally they got some chocolate colored, and it seems to me they had some other colors. If I had only one cent I bought usually a white one, though sometimes I took a red one; if I had two cents I bought a red and white, to have a variety. I have seen the time when I had three cents, and bought all three colors at once."

"I had not bought any coconut cakes for I don't know how many years, though I had seen them along year after year, particularly in summer, when the dust blows and the white ones get all covered with dirt; but the other day I bought two of the new-fashioned kind, that seems just now to be having a run; you see them on all the push carts. The new coconut cakes are all one color, a sort of molasses color; and they are not round and flat like the old ones, but thick and bunchier, like little broken-off masses of the prepared coconut."

"I found them very good. They differ somewhat from the old-fashioned coconut cake in taste and texture, as well as in build and color; the old coconut cake, while not brittle, exactly, was what you might call crumbly and sugary; it dissolved quickly in the mouth; while the contemporaneous coconut cake, after you get below the light frostwork of its exterior, has decidedly more consistence; it is what the modern child calls chewy; but the coconut taste is there all right, and as I eat them they carry me back to the days of my youth."

## A MILLIONAIRE'S WORK.

The Mammoth Baths Constructed by Adolph Sutro.

The most wonderful baths in the world are those built by Adolph Sutro, in San Francisco. The great cliffs have been tunneled, that the water of the Pacific may flow through a succession of canals into the reservoir where it is warmed; and thence into the enormous tanks. The baths are more than twice as large as the largest of the famous old Roman baths, and Mr. Sutro has tried to make them as beautiful. Twenty thousand people can sit, stand, or promenade about the tanks, which are arranged for every possible set of bathers.

There are cold baths and hot baths, swimming and diving baths, baths for children and beginners. The largest tank is two hundred and seventy-five feet long and one hundred and fifty feet wide. There is even a fresh-water tank, supplied from the waterworks above.

The place is full of beauty and color, with tropical plants and rows of growing palms; while through the glass side-walls, the ocean view stretches. The building is of steel and glass, and its glazed roof spans more than two acres. Tier after tier of rooms for the bathers rise, until they are numbered by many hundreds.

A great stage, fifty feet broad, is placed at the ocean end of the tank-room for an orchestra. The building is furnished with electric lights and elevators throughout. Three restaurants provide refreshment, and an aquarium and conservatory add to the beauty and interest. The Cliff rocks outside are covered with seals, sunning themselves, and the finest baths in the world have perhaps the most beautiful setting.

## FEMININE INGENUITIES.

The Queer Uses the Women of Peru Make of Shovel Pins.

Of the multifarious uses of the hair-pin, some, at least, are well known. They are suggested by a French traveler's description of a pin which the Indian women of Peru wear as a fasten-

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ing for their shawls. Its head is in the shape of a spoon. In fact, it is a spoon and a shawl-pin in one.

It is odd, the Frenchman says, too see a woman pull out the pin, letting her shawl drop from her bare shoulders, and proceed to use it for eating her soup or porridge. After the repast she passes the bowl of the spoon carefully between her lips two or three times, gathers up her shawl, and fastens it in place.

The same women use their slippers instead of pocketbooks—a point in which they may be said to have the advantage of their North American sisters, who, having no pockets, or none within comfortable reach, are compelled to carry their purses in their hands.

The money of Lima consists of banknotes, which go very well into the bottom of a slipper. As to the effect upon the bills, perhaps the least said the better. There is an old saying that money always smells sweet.

## Pretenders to European Thrones.

Among the many pretenders who congratulated the new emperor of Russia on his ascending the throne were the ex-king of Naples, who lays claim to the throne of Italy; the duke of Parma, now a grandfather, and who was deprived of his sovereignty at the early age of five; the former grand duke of Tuscany, the duke of Cumberland, who claims the sovereignty of the duchy of Brunswick; the various princes Karageorgevich, each of whom claims to be the de jure king of Serbia. Prince Couza, who has pretensions to the crown of Roumania; Don Miguel, of Braganza, the legitimist pretender to throne of Portugal; Prince Victor Napoleon, the duke of Orleans, the so-called duke of Normandy, and Gen. Francis de Bourbon, self-styled duke of Anjou, each signing himself as sovereign de jure of France, while from Spain's pretenders there were missives from Don Carlos, his son Don Jaime, and last, but not least, the duke of Medina-Celi.

## Cut Out for a Football Player.

A young man was paying his attentions to a "beloved object" contrary to the wishes of her family, and, persevering in it, was seized upon one day by her father, "a man of thews and sinews," and kicked violently into the street. In a day or two (after recovery) he called at the house once more. "What, again?" exclaimed paterfamilias, pulling on his boots for action. "No, no," said the young man, "I have given up all hope of winning your daughter, but in consequence of what took place the other day, I have been requested by a unanimous meeting of the committee to ask you to join our football club."

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